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ONOMATOPOEIA RELATED TO HUMAN ACTION AND FEELING IN PERSIAN AND JAPANESE

Hashem RAJABZADEH

ABSTRACT

Whether we consider the whole system of language a creation or not, it is evident that in any language there are some words and utterances made up out of natural sound, of which onomatopoeia or mimetics are the main part. A relatively large number of words in Persian and in Japanese owe their origin to attempts to imitate natural sound. Cries of animals are evident examples of this group of words. Even those few mimetic words apparently made up out of unrelated and meaningless elements are expressive of a kind of sensation or situation. The number of mimetic words commonly used in Persian is said to exceed 5000, of which only a limited part is covered by dictionaries. Writers employ mimetic words to decorate their language and the public use them to express themselves more clearly.

Mimetic words usually describe states, conditions or impressions, and in Japanese function mainly as adverbs, whereas in Persian they are typically nouns. The examples of sound symbolism in Japanese, and in Persian as well, enter into different derivation patterns. It is interesting to examine their lexical structure and syntactic features, to which a part of this paper concerns itself with a brief reference made to the literary heritage of the Japanese and Persian languages, both rich in onomatopoeia.

Mimetic words are, by meaning, divided into the three groups of phonomimes, phenomimes and psychomimes. Phonomimes imitate sounds, whereas phenomimes attempt to describe the manner or looks of a situation and psychomimes try to express one's inner feeling. This paper tries to examine the general features of phonomimes and psychomimes in Japanese and Persian as an introduction to the onomatopoeia related to human action and feeling. An appendix of most commonly used mimetic words in Persian with their equivalents in Japanese was added to provide a concise reference for comparison. This paper is a brief introduction to a subject deserving to be fully examined in the future.

INTRODUCTION

Linguists have, for a long time, argued about the origin of language and word formation without reaching a conclusion. Some consider the language a creation and some believe that language naturally develops from man's common sense. The question is a thread of the fundamental debate in philosophy over whether knowledge, wisdom and, as Zen Buddhism put it, enlightenment spring from man's consciousness or are from the outside world.

In what is called "The Chomsky Revolution" in linguistics, N. Chomsky in his book "Syntactic Structures" (1957) expounded his ideas on language and linguistic development: "The systematic structure of a language could be shown to be logically generated in accordance with the rules, the grammar of the language." (N.Chomsky, (1957)). Chomsky's exposition consists of six main statements in which he explains how a child is creative in his linguistic development.⁽¹⁾

Whatever the truth might be about the whole system of language, it is very evident that in any language there exists a group of words and utterances made up out of natural sound. Onomatopoeia or imitatives, as the name suggests, belong to this group.

An evident example of employing natural sound in forming new words is a kind of word play called "Kachijamisen" (oral 'shamisen'). It is a system of linguistic substitutes for musical notation employed by shamisen performers, in which phonemes of the language are put together to form surrogate morphemes (ton, ten, chin, rin, ren, tsun, shan, etc.), which are then associated with the three strings of the instrument and with the various strokings and fingerings to provide a complete mnemonic oral score for 'shamisen' performances, as shown in this table quoted from Miller⁽²⁾.

	Downstroke	Upstroke		Upstroke	Lefthand	Pizzicato
	Open	Fingered	Open	Fingered	Open	Fingered
First string	ton(or)	tsun	ren	ro	Pren	rin
Second string	ton don	tsun	ren	run	Pren	rin
Third string	ten	chin(or)chi	ren	ri	Pren	rin
	Double step:shan					

Popular movies of semi historical "monogatari" in Japan are called "chanbara" that is an imitation of the clanking noise of a sword rattling. "Pachinko" is evidently a mimetic reflection of the clinking noise of many small balls.

"Imitation was once considered so important as to be made the basis for a theory of the origin

of language, he so-called 'bow-wow theory'. " (3)

WORD, SOUND AND NATURE

Though borrowing has been the most common source of additions to the vocabulary of Japanese and Persian, new words are acquired or created in several other ways. Those which seem more prolific are derivation, compounding, functional shift, back formation and clipping, proper nouns, imitation, blending and original coinage. (4)

A relatively large number of words in Persian as well as in Japanese apparently owe their origin to attempts to imitate natural sounds. "Qār - qār" 'kā - kā', "mio - mio" 'niā - niā' and "go r - gor" 'go - go' are supposed to remind us of the noises made by crows, cats and flowing water. they are not accurate imitations, since they are pronounced with sounds characteristic of the respective language. Both "qūquli - qūqu" (in Persian) and "koké - koko" (in Japanese) are imitations of a rooster's crow. We must attribute the difference between these words to the differing sound system of the two languages. (5)

Of mimetic words, very few are apparently made up out of unrelated, meaningless elements. Outright coinage - as it is called by linguists - unlike the compound, clipping, derivative and blend, is hard to remember and less probably associated with their source. Nelson⁽⁶⁾ gives words like quiz, pun, slang, and fun as examples of coinage in English. In Persian هَشَلْهَف, هَپَلْهَف "hashalhaf" (hachalhaf) 'incoherent', "hapali - hapu" هَپَلِی هَپُو 'harum - scarum and میرزا قششم "mirza - qashamsham" are examples of these words. The last item is a compound made of "mirza" 'prince; an abolished common title for literate people' and "qashamsham" which is apparently a coinage. Persian dictionaries give varying interpretation for this word; 1) کسی که اَدْعَا می‌رَازَد 'a pretender who is not qualified as a clerk; 2) کسی که خود را لوس و نتر کند و بزرگتر از آنچه هست جلوه دهد 'one who ingratitates himself in an insipid manner; 3) کسی که دست به سیاه و سفید نمیزند و دماغ خود را بالا می‌گیرد 'one who does not bother himself in doing anything and is arrogant (this source gives also another version of this word, قُرتی قَشَمَشَم 'qerti - qashamsham'); 4) با جامه و پیراهن جلف و قیمتی 'wearing a guy and costly clothes. Although its origin is not known, it is almost certain that the word is creation of a single comedian or a humorous person.

ONOMATOPOEIA IN JAPANESE

Mimetic words usually describe states, conditions or impressions and in Japanese function mainly

as adverbs. By meaning, these words are divided into three groups:

PHONOMIMES (gisei – go) try to imitate sounds; “niā – niā” (cat), “kā – kā” (raven); “cun – cun” ‘chirping’; “būn – bun” ‘whizzing’;...

PHENOMIMES (gitai – go) attempt to describe the manner or looks of a situation: “būrā – burā (šte iru)” ‘idle’; “šikú – šiku(nāku)” ‘crying quietly’; “bērā – berā” ‘eloquent’; “poc u – pocu” ‘in small drops’; “soyo – soyo” ‘breezy’; “hoso – hoso” ‘sneakingly’;...

PSYCHOMIMES (gizyoo – go)⁽¹⁰⁾ try to express one’s inner feeling or, in some cases, one’s physical reaction: “čiku – čiku” (me ga – – suru) ‘feeling pain’ (in one’s eye); “gān – gān” (atama ga – – suru) ‘having headache’; “bātā – bātā” (šinžuga – – suru) ‘beating heart (out of anxiety)’.

A word may be used with more than one meaning, and it is not always clear which group a given mimetic belongs to.

Phonomimes are more or less a part of the lexical structure of any language, since imitation is the most natural way of word formation. Phenomimes and psychomimes, to which this paper limits itself, are by far more deliberate in form and more sophisticated in significance. Japanese and Persian are rich in these forms of vocabulary.

LEXICAL STRUCTURE

The Japanese fondness for decorative language, as Miller puts it, “finds its most striking demonstration in the extremely rich repertory of forms incorporating various kinds of impressionistic sound symbolism. These are of many types. Some are simple onomatopoeia and appear to imitate certain sounds of nature” ⁽¹¹⁾.

These examples of sound symbolism in Japanese enter into different derivation patterns. Typically they are nouns appearing before the particle “to” ‘in such a way as...’, or with the verb “su ru” ‘do’; often they are used as adverbs and often they are reduplicated.⁽¹²⁾

It is interesting that mimetics used with the particle “to” are considered nouns, since onomatopoeia in Persian typically have this feature.

The introduction given above about sound symbolism in Japanese holds true in Persian too, which incorporates a rich repertory of onomatopoeia amply used in literature.

A relatively large number of birds’ name apparently owe their origin to attempts to imitate the cries of the birds. In Japanese several of these combine an onomatopoetic morpheme with “su.” Old Japanese has both “ugu fisu” and “uku fisu” for the modern “uguisu” ‘warbler’. The Persian name of this bird, “čakāvak,” and the one for swallow, “čelčelé”, suggest a similar

origin. The cuckoo's name is melodious, as in this poem:

Uchishimeri The irises,
Ayame zo koaru Their petals damp, are fragrant.
Hototogisu Listen ! The cuckoos
Naku ya satsuki no Are calling now, this rainy
Ame no yugure Evening in May
Fujiwara no Yoshitsune(1169 – 1206)

The cricket's mimetic name decorates this “senryu” (short verse);

Osareba susuki when I pass it – a pampas grass;
hanaseba kirigirisu when I let go – go a cricket (13)

In Japanese different kinds of crickets have their special names and cries; “matsu – mushi” (the pine cricket) that cries “chinchironin”, “suzu – mushi” (riinrin), “korogi” (ri ri ri ri); and a very noisy one, “kutsuma mushi” (gachagacha). In Heian sources an especially loud noised insect is called “kutsukutsu boshi,” the one that cries kutsukutsu.

It is interesting that the suffix “ ڪ ”, ak – ak in Pahlavi, middle Iranian language and “ ڪ ” in modern Persian, as “boshi” in Japanese can make a noun from a natural sound. سوت سوتڪ “sutsutak” ‘whistle’, بَد بَدڪ (بَد بَدِه) “bad – badak” (bad – badé) ‘quail’, فشفشك “fešfešak” (fešfeše) ‘(sky) rocket’ and دوروك “rowrowak” ‘go – cart’ are a few of many referents of this form.

Reflection of the sound of nature in the Japanese language could also be found among a number of adverbs with special shapes (many reduplicated) that refer for the most part to emotional effect; and hence are called Affective Adverbs;

(1) Reduplicated dissyllables such as niko – niko: nikkori ‘smiling’; haki – haki: hakkiri ‘brisk’; meki – meki: mekkiri ‘remarkably’; yuku – yuku: yukkuri ‘slowly’; nobi – nobi: nobiri ‘carefree’; ūkā – ūkā: ukkari ‘inattentively’; biku – biku: bikkuri ‘startled’; and boyā – boyā: bon yari vague’.

(2) Similar morphemes that occur only in the reduplicated form: dosi – dosi ‘rapidly, constantly’; sékā – sekā ‘fidgetly, restless’; zokú – zoku ‘feeling chilled’, and two more monosyllables: gun – gun ‘steadily’ (progressing), vigorously’; don – don ‘rapidly, steadily’.

(3) Disparate dissyllables: teki – pāki ‘briskly’; tirā – hora ‘sporadically’.⁽¹⁴⁾

Examples of mimetic words in similar shapes are also ample in Persian as shown in the Appendix.

SYNTACTIC FEATURES

Whereas mimetics in Persian are originally nouns, these words in Japanese are mainly adverbs simply intensifying a verb and are best understood in context with particular verbs: “te o hirā – hirā sāeru (demonstrating the falling cherry petals by weaving hand); “amé ga zā – zā furu” ‘raining as a shower’; “ro sãn wa hana o búrā – burā saseru” ‘the elephant’s trunk is pendulous’. As explained by Suzuki Takao⁽¹⁵⁾ (in Japanese) not only are verbs and adjectives easier to define than nouns, but they can also be defined with more universality.

Of mimetics, some are types of lexical formation of subjectival adjectival nouns;

(1) Reduplicated monosyllables and dissyllables from classical Chinese, such as; “yuu – yuu” ‘deliberate’; “kái – kei” ‘penetrating’; “ai – ai” ‘harmonious’.

(2) Words of Japanese origin. These words can occur also as adverbs. Sometimes a subjective adjectival noun is directly followed by another one to form a new phrase. Thus “kuukuu” ‘vacant (– minded)’ followed by “zyakú – zyāku” ‘silent’ form “kuukuu zyākú – zyāku” ‘absent minded’. Some words appear to be used only in such formations, like “seisei doodoo” ‘fair and square’⁽¹⁶⁾.

Among mimetic adverbs, there are adjectival nouns which are defective in that they occur only with the subjective essive “to” (and not with the subjective coupla “tari / taru”): ‘kit – to’ ‘surely; sternly’; “tyot – to” ‘a bit’. Other subjective adjectival nouns that are similarly defective seem to belong at the same time to other classes: “zokú – zoku” ‘repeatedly; successively’ is a predicable adverb but very occasionally used with the subjective essive “to”.⁽¹⁷⁾

Mimetic words in Persian have varying functions in the context:

1) Genetive; like جیرجیر گنجشک‌ها مرا بیدار کرد “jir – jir – é gonjeskhā marā bidār kard” ‘sparrows’ chirping woke me up’.

2) Adverbial; like آن پسر در را توتق توتق کوبید “ān pesar dar rā taq – taq kūbid” the boy knocked repeatedly at the door.

Sometimes a mimetic noun (usually not a reduplicated one) is made an adverb by using the adverbial prefix “ی” ‘i’ in which case the last letter of the original word is pronounced hard; like; او هرری به ریشما خندید “u herri be rish – e ma xandid” ‘he laughed at me loudly’; ماشین غیژی راه افتاد “mašin qizi rāh oftād” ‘the car drove away with a whiz’

Not in a few cases کنان “konan” ‘in (such a) way’ is added to a mimetic noun, usually a reduplicated one, to transform it to a new class of word; like لک‌لک کنان “leklek konan” in this poem;

لَکَلک بیايد با يَدَک ، بر قَصرِ عالی چون فَکَلک Laklak biyāyad bā yadak, bar qasre āli čon falak.
 لَکَلک کُنَانِکَ "الْمَلْک لَک، يَا مُسْتَعَان يَا مُسْتَعَان" lek - ĩek konān k "al - molko lak yā mostaān
 ya mostaān!"

3) Adjectival. Adding ی "i" or و "u" is the most usual way to change a mimetic noun into an adjective, like زَقَزَقُو/زَقَزَقِي "zeq - zeqi/zeq - zequ" 'grizzling baby', غُرْغُرُو/غُرْغُرِي "qhor - qhori/qhor - qhoru" 'muttering (old man)'.

4) Verbal. Compound (compositum) verbs are made with prefixed mimetic nouns, like کَرَوَکِر کردن "kerr - o - ker kardan" 'to titter', چَهِ زَدَن "čah - čah zadan" 'to twitter', هَا جِ وَا جِ ماندن "hāj - o - vāj māndan" 'to be flabbergasted'.

It is interesting that Mawlavi(1230 - 1273), the great Iranian mystic poet, has transformed the mimetic noun مینگ "ming" 'muttering' into a verb system مَنگیدن "mangidan" 'to mutter', thereby modifying it with tenses;

این بَمَنگیدند در زیرِ زبَان in bémangidand dar zir - é zabān,
 آن اسیران با هم اندر بحثِ آن ān asirān bā ham andar bahs - é ān.

Debating on the matter, the captives muttered among themselves...

پس همی مَنگید با خود زیر لب pas hami mangid bā xod zir - ē lab,
 در جوابِ حیرتم آن بوالعجب dar javāb - é heiratam ān bolajab.

In reply to my reflection, the buffoon muttered...

Mimetics are employed to make verbs in Japanese also, like; "zāwā - meku" 'is rustling' (from "zāwā - zāwā" 'rustling'); "hata - meku" 'flutters' (from "hata - hata" 'fluttering'); "kir a - meku" 'glitters' (from "hirā - hirā" 'glittering')⁽¹⁸⁾.

ONOMATOPOEIA AND PHONETICS

As pointed out earlier, the varying forms of mimetics in different languages are to be attributed to their different phonetic systems. In giving examples of some mimetic quotations found missing in dictionaries, Martin⁽¹⁹⁾ explains that these words form a set with special phonetic characteristics. Some are very old and widely used; others are ephemeral creations. The phonetic system utilizes syllables and moras in ways that facilitate the creation of new variants from established forms. Phonetic symbolism helps make connotational variants that differ only in vowels or in choice of initial consonants by taking advantage of series like this;⁽²⁰⁾

(1) s sy t ty z zy d

(2) p py h hy b by

(3) k ky g gy

In Japanese a considerable proportion of mimetic words begin with “p – ”, probably followed in frequency by forms in “k – ”, “g – ”, “h – ” and “b” ;⁽²¹⁾ whereas in Persian “h – ”, “d – ” and “q – ” are frequent.⁽²²⁾

The phenomenon related to imitation is sound symbolism; the habit of associating a certain type or class of meanings with a certain sound or cluster of sounds. There seems to be in Persian an association between the initial sound combination spelled “da – (ta)” with a sudden loud sound, as in “daq – daq” ‘percussion’, or “dang – dang” ‘equipoised’. Persian speakers associate the initial “go – ” and final “z” with a rapid, turbulent, or destructive motion, as in “gorop – gorop” ‘beating noise’ “gor – gor” ‘crackling noise of fire’, “qiz̄” ‘whiz̄’, and “viž – viž” . In Japanese “z – ” sounds imperative in this way, like “zā – zā” (amé ga –) ‘shower rain’, and “zāwā – zāwā” ‘noise/fuss’.

As explained by Martin⁽²³⁾, one group of words is built upon single syllables by applying various expansions, with and/or without reduplications, as in the following set, all meaning (in Japanese) something like ‘puffing’ (together with extended senses, e.g. ‘suddenly’;

CV paa CVq – CV pap – pa = paq – pa
 CV q paap CV – CVq pa – paq
 CVn pan CVq – CVq pap – paq = paq – paq

Of reduplicated mimetic words, a large group of dissyllables enter into variant formations of the following types;⁽²⁴⁾

CV₁ CV₂ – CV₁ CV₂ hata – hata, pata – pata, bata – bata ‘flap, slap hastily’
 CV₁ n/q CV₂ ri – , pattari battari ‘with a bang; suddenly’
 CV CV n – , patan, batan with a thud; suddenly’

In Persian, monosyllabic words are phonetically subject to the CV(C(C)) form, and dissyllables all follow the CV(C) – CV(C(C)) formula.⁽²⁵⁾

ONOMATOPOEIA IN PERSIAN AND JAPANESE LITERATURE

There are many imitatives of very delicate and imaginary nature in Japanese, and in Persian as well, each with a deep sensation and meaning. The Japanese describe a butterfly’s moving from flower to flower as “hira – hira”, and the (imaginary) sound of snowfall, most probably not heard of in any other language, is “šin – šin”. Rain can fall “zá – zá” ‘as a shower’, “pocori – pocori”, “pocu – pocu”, “pára – pára”, or “šito – šito” ‘drop by drop’. Many mimetic words are used to express feelings of pain.

An acquaintance or a friend living far away is sometimes remembered by a Persian speaker

saying گوشم صدا کرد “gūšam sedā kard” or گوشش صدا کند “gūšas sedā konad” my/his ears are burning (in Persian, ringing’), which is also an expression of sensation.

Although extensively used by common people in daily conversation, hence in dictionaries mostly referred to as vulgar or colloquial, these words are well established in literature and appreciated by the classics of both cultures. Great poets and writers of Persian and Japanese masterpieces have applied these imitatives to decorate their languages and express themselves in the most impressive way. Examples of these masterly quotations are ample in Japanese and Persian classics to which a few references are made here;

In one passage of his work, Chikamatsu Monzaemon(1653 – 1735), the greatest of Japanese dramatists, maintains close parallelism in two pairs of lines of seven and five syllables, matching step by step an onomatopoetic word, a verb, and two nouns:

kuru – kuru tagurt / kaze no yo wa /
seki – seki mawaru / hi yōjin /

“(the night patrolman) coughing and coughing as (he hurries) on his rounds with a cold on this (windy) night, as he cautions ‘be careful of fire!’ Here *kuru* is both *ku – ru* “come” and an onomatopoetic representation of the sound of coughing; *kaze* is both “a cold” and “wind,” and *seki* both “hurrying” and “coughing.” There is also assonance in the opening line, since the opening *kuru* is repeated, with initial voicing, in *taguru*.⁽²⁶⁾

An excellent example of how decorative language can illuminate a memorable prose is a passage describing the retired Empror Kenreimon-in’s hut, from the “Ohara goko” chapter of the Heike Monogatari (a Japanese war tale written around 1220):

<p>ushiro wa yama, mae wa no – be, isasa ozasa ni kaze sawagi, yo ni tatanu mi no narai to te, uki fushi shigeki takebashira, miyako no kata no kotozute wa, madō ni yueru masegaki ya, wazuka ni kototou mono to te wa, mine ni kozutau saru no koe, shizu ga tsumagi no ono no oto, korera ga otozure narade wa, masaki no kazura aotsuzura, kuru hito mare na – ru tokoro nari.</p>	<p>Behind was the mountain and in front was the moor, and the bamboo grasses rustled loudly in the wind. As is the way with those who have no friends in the world, she seldom heard any news from the capital, but instead the cries of the monkeys as they sprang from tree to tree and the sound of the woodcutter’s axe. . . .⁽²⁷⁾</p>
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As Miller⁽²⁸⁾ explains: “Here the phrase ‘isāsa ozāsa’ begins the employment of “notable” language in the passage; ‘ozasa’ is ‘small bamboo, bamboo grass’, and ‘isasa’ is a sound – symbolic form used both to imitate the sound of the wind as it rustles in the vegetation and to duplicate the rhythm and sound of the following word ‘ozasa’. Apart from this, ‘isasa’ has, as the Japanese dictionaries put it, ‘no meaning’.”

Around the time of the compilation of the Heike Monogatari, Mawlavi(Rūmi; d.1230), the most celebrated Iranian mystic and poet, employed many onomatopoic words in his poems;

از جمادی عالم جانها روید Az jamādi ālamé janhā ravid,
غلغل اجزای عالم بشنوید qolqol – é ajzāy – e ālam bešnavid

Ascend from materiality into the world of spirits, hearken to the loud voice of the universe;⁽²⁹⁾

گفتا تو چنگ مایی، و اندر ترنگ مایی Goftā to čang – é māii, vandar tarang – é māii
 پس چیست زاری تو چون در کنار مایی pas čist zāri – e to, con dar kénar – e māii.

He said: "You are my harp, bearing and hearing the melody; now that you are with me, what is your lamentation for?"

The word "čang" in this passage could also be interpreted as grip; and "tarang", a mimetic word, as the sound of bow-string when drawn, meaning accordingly you are caught and in my arrow – reach.

Mawlavi has also used the mimetic words "kāq – kāq" 'čaw – čaw', "ček – ček" 'drop by drop', "taq – taq" 'knocking noise', "hāy – hū" 'uproar', and "ti – ti" 'toddling' to decorate his verses;

کاغ کاغ و نره زاغ سیاه Kāq – kāq o nare – ié zāq – é siyah,
 دائماً باشد بدن را عمر کاه dāēman bāsad badan ra omr kāh

Croaking and cawing of the black raven is always tormenting.

آب نور او جو بر آتش جهد Āb – e nūr – e ū čō bar ātaš jahad,
چکچک از آتش بر اندوخش جهد ček – ček az ātaš berānad xoš jahad.

His (Almighty's) light emitted on fire,

makes the splendid sound of "ček – ček", as if water drops on fire.

بر سر تختی شنید آن نیکنام Bar sar – é taxti šanid ān nikhām,
طقطقی و هایشوئی شب ز بام taq – taqi o hāy – hūyi šab ze bām

On a bedstead at night, the good man noticed
 a knocking noise and an uproar from the roof.

بهر طفلی نو پدر تی تی کند Bahr – e tefli now pedar ti – ti konad
 گرچه عقلش هندسه گیتی کند garče aqlas hendese – i giti konad.

The father exercises a new born baby to toddle
 though himself a celebrated geometrician.

Before Mawlavi, Khāqani (d.1198) used, among the others, the mimetic word "tana – tananana" in his verses;

انگشت ارغنون زن روی به زخمه بر Angošt – e arqanun zan – é rumi be zaxmé – bar,
 تبلرزه "تانا تانا" برافکند tablarze – ie "tanā – tanānānā" barafkanad.

The Roman organist's finger(s) when playing,
 makes the melody of "tanā – tanānānā".

Hafez(d. 1389), The great Iranian poet, decorates his verse with “hu – hu” ‘bird’s cry’, and “hei – hei” ‘Ah!; alas!’

چو گل نقاب برافکند و مرغ زد هوهُو Čo gol neqāb barafkand o morq zad “hu – hu” ,
منه ز دست پیاله چه می‌کنی هی‌هی maneh ze dast piyāleh če mikoni “hei – hei” ?

Now that the flower uncovered its beauty

and the bird is singing “hu – hu” , what is your lamentation for?

The following verse is also from Hafez, employing “han” and “hey” ‘hey!’;

هشیار شو که مرغ چمن مست گشت هان! Hošyār šo ke morq – e čaman mast gash hān!
بیدار شو که خواب عدم در پی است هی! Bidār šo ke xāb – é adam dar pei ast hey!

Beware! Come to your senses now that the nightingale is intoxicated (of joy)

Hey! wake up now that the eternal sleep (death) will follow.

Abolfazl – e Beihaqi (d. 1077), a great writer and historian of the 11th century Iran, in his book of history, “Tarix – e Beihaqi” , describes the horror of the “Saraxs battle” by the chanking noise of swords;

و ترکا ترک یخاسته گشتی هزار هزار بُتک می‌کوبند، و شعاع
سنانها و شمشیرها در میان گرد می‌دیدم. (30) Va tarkātark bexāst, gofti hezār – hezār potk
mikuband, va šoāē šanānha va šamšīrhā dar
miyān – é gard mididam.

‘The chanking noise of sword rattling resounded, as if thousands of smith’s hammer are being beaten; and I could see the reflection of spears and swords in the dust.’

The noise of sword rattling tingles differently in the ears of Nizami(d. 1217), the great lyric poet, who records it “tarangātarang” in these versés of his book, “Sharafnāme” ;

ترنگا ترنگ درخشنده تیغ Tarangātarang – é daraxsandé tiq,
ز مه تا به ماهی برآورده میغ ze mah tā be māhi barāvardé miq.

The clanking noise of the shining swords raised a cloud – like dust

ترنگا ترنگی که زد ساز او Tarangātarang – i ke zad sāj – é ū,
به از زندر زردشت و آواز او beh az zand – e zardošt o āvāz – é ū.

The clanking noise of his sword(or, the melody of his instrument played,)

Sounds better than “Zand” (versed book) of Zoroaster and its melodious recital.

In contemporary Persian literature mimetic words are also commonly employed by distinguished poets and writers. The words “dang – dang” ‘dingle’, and “xeš – xeš” ‘rustle’ in the following verses from Fereydūn Tavallali(d. 1985) are evident examples;

ناگاه خیره کژدمی از گوشه مُغاک Nāgāh xiré každomi az guše – ié moqāk, az dang – dan
از دنگ دنگ تیشه هراسن و خشمناک g – é tiše harāsān o xašmnāk; sar mikašad ze jomjomei
سرمی‌کشد ز جُمجمه ای شوم و دل‌گزای šūm o delgazāi, mitāzadaš.be masti o miduzadaš be jāi
میتازدش بمستی و میدوزدش بجای

A badstrong scorpion, alarmed and provoked by the gingle of chip – axe, suddenly appears from the corner of the pit. . .

گاه در خش خش پرهممه مرگردخت Gāh dar xeš-xeš-é por hamhame-ie marg-e deraxt, rahzani
 رهزنی میجهد از گوشه دیوار بزیر mijehad az guše – ie divār be zir; mādari miparad az
 مادری میپرد از گریه طفلی از خواب gerie – ie tefli az xāb,
 کودکی میمکد آهسته ز پستانی شیر (31) kudaki mimekad āhesté ze pestani šir.

Once in a while, in the aproaring rustle of the death of tree, a thief jumps down a wall. . .

In a passage of the novel “Mādarbozorg Xāb nabud” (the Grandmother was not Asleep) by F.Tonekaboni, the mimetic words کُرکُری “kor – kori” ‘nonsense’, هول هولکی hol – holaky” ‘hurry – scurry’, and تاپ تاپ “tāp – tāp” ‘rattling’ are expressive;

او را که بیخیر ایستاده بود و کُرکُری میخواند، دو سه متر آنطرف تر
 برتاب کرد. هول هولکی خودش را تُو انداخته بود و حتی فراموش کرده بود
 سلام هم بکند. صدای تاپ تاپ پای بچه ها را از توی تاریکی می شنید. (32)

U ra kē bixabar istāde bud o korkori mixānd do sé metr āntaraftar partāb kard.
 Holholaki xodaš ra tú andāxte va hattā farāmūš karde būd salām ham bekonad.
 Sédāi – e tāp – tāp – é pāy – é baččehā rā az tūy – é tāriki mišanid.

(The boy) pushed the woman who was standing on his way and speaking nonsense.
 He had rushed in hurry – scurry and had even forgotten to great. He could hear the
 rattling of the children's foot – fall in the dark.

APPENDIX

The following list of Persian and Japanese mimetic words (Phenomimes and Psychomimes, and mainly reduplicated ones) is extensive but not exhaustive. The items, arranged in Persian alphabetic order, were to display similar sets in a rough sort of way.

Japanese equivalents were in most part compiled by consulting a group of native speakers of different social strata.

Persian			Japanese
Āax,	آخ	"ouch.	
āax - o - ux,	آخ و اُوخ	To moan with pain"	
āax - o - vāax,	آخ و واخ		
āah,	آه		
āah - o - vāh,	آه و واه		
vāah,	واه		
ox	اوخ		
Āx,	اخ	"hauling"	
ax - ax	اخ اخ		
Āy	آی	"oh! alas!"	
āy - āy	آی آی		
Ey šegeft	ای شگفت	"oh!"	Wā! hée
hey	هی		
Bām	بام	"thump on the head"	Pokā - pokā
bāmb	بامب		
bāmb - bāmb	بامب بامب		
Boč - boč,	بُچ	"chatter"	Peča - kuča
peč - peč,	پچ		
pič - pič	پیچ		
Bah!	به	"oh! wow!"	Wa - wa!
vah! vah - vah!	واه	O that!"	(sugoi - sugoi)
bah - bah!	به به		
pah! pah - pah!	په په		
zéh!	زه		
Pok پک pok - pok	پُک	"puf"	Supā - supā
Pet - pet	پت		Čika - čika
Tāp - tāp	تا پ تا پ	"to go pit - a - pat; beating"	Basaq - to
Čelik - Čelik	چلیک		
Jerang - jerang	چرنگ	"jingle"	Jārā - jārā
jering - jering,	چرینگ		
jiring - jiring,	جیرینگ		
jelang - jelang,	چلنگ		
jing - jing,	جینگ		
darang - darang,	دَرنگ		
dring - dring,	درینگ		
dang - dang,	دنگ		
dang - o - ding	دنگ و دینگ		
Jéz - jez	جز	"sizzling, frizz"	Merā - merā,
jezz - o - jez	جز و جز		hiri - hiri(itai)
jezz - o - vez,	جز و وز		

jelezz – o – velez	چِلَز و وِلَز		
Jéq – jéq, jéqq – o – jeq	جَغ جَغ جِق و جِق	“rattling noise”	Kāta – kāta, pon – pon
Jír – jír jír – o – jír jír – o – vir	جِر جِر جِر و جِر جِر و وِر	“chrip, chirr, peep”	Gami – gāmi
Jik – jik	جِک جِک	“chrip, peep”	Gāmi – gāmi
Čap – čāp, čap – čap, čalap – čalap Šalap – o – šalap, māč – o – muč	چَپ چَپ چَپ چَپ چَلَب چَلَب شَلَب و شَلَب ما چ و موچ	“smooching”	Chu – chu – buju – buj u
Čak – čak	چَک چَک	“dripping”	Potā – potā
Ček – ček	چَک چَک	“drop by drop”	Počuri – počuri, para – para, poču – poču, seto – seto
Čah – čah	چَہ چَہ	“twittering”	
Mur – mur	مور مور	“creeping sensation, shivers”	
Xār – xār	خَا خَا	“palpitation of the heart”	Hārā – hārā
Xar – xar xor – xor	خَر خَر خَر خَر	“snore, ruckle, death – rattle”	Go – go –
tap – tap, tālāp – tālāp	تَپ تَپ تا لاپ تا لاپ		
Tap – tap, tālāp – tālāp, tap – o – tup, gorom – gorom, gorop – gorop	تَپ تَپ تا لاپ تا لاپ تا پ و تا پ گُرومب گُرومب گُروپ گُروپ	“ralpitation”	Dokí – doki, dokín – dokin,
Topoq	تُپُق	“stammering”	
Tarang, tarangā – tarang, tarkātark čakačāk čakačāk čakāčāk čaqačaq	تَرَنگ تَرَنگا تَرَنگ تَرکا تَرکا چا کا چا کا چکا چکا چکا چا کا چقا چقا	“sword rattling; clank(ing noise)”	Čanbara
Tarang	تَرَنگ	“noise of bow – string”	

Tarang	تَرَنگ	"noise of string instrument"	
Taraq – o – turuq, šaraq – o – šúruq	تَرَق و تَرُوق شَرَق و شُرُوق	"crackling (noise)"	Gisi – gisi, gata – gata
Taq – taq taq – o – túq	تَغ=تَق تَق و تَوَق	"knocking, rattling noise"	Ze ton – ton
Ték – tèk, tik – tāk, tik – tik, tik – o – tik	تِک تِک تِیک تِاک تِیک تِیک تِیک و تِیک	"click, tick" "beating of pulse"	Čikuta – čikuta, koč – koč
Tik – tik	تِیک تِیک	"feeling chilled, thrilled"	Hata – bata, hara – hara
Tété – pété	تِیتَه تِیتَه	"stammering"	
Talān – talān	تَلان تَلان	"in a stately manner, to sail"	
Talaq – talaq, xerr – o – xer, čélek – čélek,	تَلِق=تَلَق خَر و خَر چَلک چَلک	"jolting, rattling, rumbling"	Karan – koron (for geta only)
Sok(zadan)	سُک(زَدَن)	"goad, prod"	Gāri – gāri
Sok – sok, gom – gom = kom – kom	سُک سُک کُم کُم، کُم کُم	"foot – fall"	Téku – téku
Sūt(zadan)	سُوت(زَدَن)	"whistle"	Booo – booo
Sú – sú	سُو سُو	"flicker, glimmer"	Hirā – hirā
Šāt – o – šūt, qārt – o – qūrt, hārt – o – pūrt	شَات و شُوت قَارَت و قُورَت هَارَت و پُورَت	"bragging, bluffing"	
Šālāp – o – šulup	شَالاپ و شُولوپ	"flopping"	Bācha – bācha, Jābu – jābu
Šer – šer	شُر شُر	"murmuring (noise)"	
Šor – šor	شُر شُر	"(noise of) falling water"	Zā – zā (furu)
Qār – o – qūr	قَار و قُور = غَار و غُور	"rumbling noise"	Qūrū – qūrū, qū – qū
Qér – qér	غِر غِر	"crucking noise, gling"	Gara – gara
Qor – qor, qor – o – lond, lond – lond	غُر غُر غُر و لُنْد لُنْد لُنْد	"grumbling, murmuring, muttering"	Bú – bú, buču – buču, gāmi – gāmi
Qarang	غَرَنگ	"clamour,	

Qariv qolqol	غريبو غلغل	exclamation"	
Qež, qiz, غز	غيز	"ping;whiz"	Suu – – ;hiün;hiu
Qiz – qiz, viž – viž	غيز غيز ويژ ويژ	"creacking noise"	
Qéž – qéž, gom – gom, kom – kom	غز غز گم گم کم کم	"crackling noise"	Kiukk – kiu
Qaş – qaš, qāh – qāh, قاه قاه qah – qah, qahqaha, kér – kér, kerr – o – ker kex – kex her – her hérre – kéré hér – o – hér herri	قاش قاش قه قه قهقهه کر کر کتر و کر کخ کخ هر هر هره کتره هر و هر هری	"fit of laughter, boisterous laugh, titter"	Kusu – kusu, nia – nia, nita – nita, kérā – kérā lak – ak wāhā – há hé hé hé hé
Xer – xer, Xerr – o – xer,	خر خر ختر و خر	"ruckle"	Gi – gi
Xeš – xeš	خس خس	"rale;rattle"	
Xeš – xeš xešš – o – xeš	خس خس خس و خس	"rustle, frow – frow"	Kāsā – kāsā, gāsā – gāsā
Dār – dār	دار دار		Giyā – giyā, gā – gā
Dālāmb – dālāmb	دالامب دالامب		Ra – ra ra – ra – ra –
Dālāmb – o – dülumb, dālang – o – dlung, dang – o – fang	دالامب و دلولمب دالنگ و دلنگ دنگ و فنگ	"pomp and circumstance"	
Daraq(o)daraq	دراق (و) دراق	"crucking(noise)"	Gāta – gāta
Daq – daq, daq – o – daq	دق دق دق و دق	"percussion"	Kon – kon, ton – ton, don – don – don – don
Dang – dang, dangādang	دنگ دنگ دنگا دنگ	"ding – dong, equipoised"	Gan – gan
Dō – dō	دو دو	"(sensation in painful eye)"	Čira – čira, čiko – čiko
Zéq – zeq, zéq – o – zūq, zāq – o – zūq, zāq – o – ziq	ذق ذق = زغ زغ ذق و ذوق زاق و زوق زاق و زيق	"clattering, chirping, grizzling"	Ga – ga –

Zoq – zoq	ذُق ذُق	“having a sharp pain”	Zuki – zuki, zukin – zukin, juki – juki, zi – zi –
Zér – zer, ar – o – ūr	زِر زِر عَر و عُر	“gizzling as a baby”	Gāmi – gāmi, ga – ga –
Zol – zol	زُل زُل	“dazzling(eye)”	Jiro – jiro
Zamzam	زَمَزَم	“humming”	Sārā – sārā, tsuru – tsuru
Sekseké, hakče, hakak, hake	سَكِسَكِه هَكچِه هَكَكِه هَكِه	“hiccup”	Goho – goho, hikú – hikú
Kāv – kāv kal – kal	کَا و کَا کَل کَل	“idle talk”	Boču – boču gā – gā; wā – wā –
Gorop – gorop	گُرُوب گُرُوب	“beating(noise)	Bātā – bātā
Gor – gor, gorr – o – gor	گُر گُر گُر و گُر	“(noise of)flowing water”	Go – go(kawa ga – –) dō – dō –
Hōrr – o – hōr	هُر و هُر	“(noise of)falling water”	Zā – – do – do – do – do – do –
Gor – gor	گُر گُر	“cracking noise of fire”	Bō – – bō – – pac – pac
Gor – gor	گُر گُر	“(sensation of high fever)”	
Géz – géz(kardan)	گَز گَز	“(to)smart as a wound”	Biri – biri piri – piri
Kom – kom, گم گم gom – gom	گَم گَم	“digging tone”	Don – don
Gij – gij gij – o – vij	گِج گِج گِج و وِج	“giddy, dizzy”	Fūra – fūra
Lop – lop(xordan) holop – holop	لُوب لُوب(خوردن) هَلَب هَلَب	“(to)lap; – gazzle”	Gaču – gaču
Laq – laq	لَغ لَغ طَلَق	“shaking”	Būra – būra(saseru) dota – dota
Lok(negah kardan) zol – zol; ber – ber	لُک(نگاه کردن) زُل زُل بِر بِر	“(to staire)”	Jiro – jiro; ji – to
Lek – lek(kardan)	لِک(کردن)	“scraping along; hanging or logging behind”	Toro – toro noro – noro

Lei – lei(kardan)	لَی لَی (کردن)	“hopping”	Pyün – pyün(tobu)
Lah – lah(zadan)	لَه لَه (زدن)	“panting; yearning”	Hā – hā –
Malač – malač; malač – o – muluč	مَلَج مَلَج مَلَج و مَلُوج	“ (to, smach one’s lips; lick one’s lips”	Guča – guča
Mūs – mus(kardan)	مُوس مُوس (کردن)	“flattering”	Peko – peko
Noč – noč(kardan)	نُچ نُچ (کردن)	“ (as a negative answer)”	Ue – ue
Qelqel(ak)	غَلِغَل (ک)	“tickling”	Kūsügütāi
Qol – qol	غُلْغُل	“gurgle”	Qoču – qoču
Qol – qol	غُلْغُل	“bubbling(noise)	Tok – tok
Qol – qol	غُلْغُل	“bubbling(noise)”	Gūra – gūra
Qang – gqang	غَنگ غَنگ	“grizzling (noise)”	Tí – ti
Fés – fés més – més	فِس فِس مِس مِس	“lingering; (to tarry, dally)”	Toro – toro, Güzū – güzū
Faş, faş – faş	فَش فَش فَش	“gushing, squirting”	Híss
Fén – fén, fin – o – fin	فِن فِن فِن و فِن	“snot”	Su – su(hana é – –)
Féng(o)féng, mén(o)mén	فَنگ(و) فَنگ مِن(و) مَن	“muttering”	jūro – jūro, Buču – buču
Füt – füt	فُوت فُوت	“whistling”	Fū – fū
Qārt – o – qūrt hart – o – purt	قارت و قُورت هارت و پُورت	“bragging”	
Qāq	قا ق	“tumbling(noise)”	Qāšan
Qāl – qālé, qāl – o – qil, qāl – maqal	قال قاله قال و قیل قال مقال	“noise;fuss”	Zāwa – zāwa
Qerč – qerč, qereč – quruč, qoroč – qoroc	قِرچ قِرچ قِرچ قُروچ قُرُوج قُرُوج	“(crackling noise of teeth)”	Bāri – bāri
Qolop – qolop, qort – qort	قُلپ قُلپ قُورت قُورت	“gulp – gulp, sip”	Kogū – kogū, kirā – kirā, gobu – gobu
Qili – vili	قِلی قِلی	“gnawing sensation; turn over”	

Kér - kér کر کر xér - xér	خِر خِر	"humming"	Gārā - gārā
Korkori(xandan)	گُرگُری خواندن	"(evade the main question)"	
Keš - o - feš	کِش و فِش	"coquetry; amorous gest"	
Néq; néq - néq nék - o - nāl	بِنِغ ، بِنِغ بِنِک و نَال	"nagging; complaining"	Buču - buču
Vér - vér	وَر وَر	"labbering; muttering"	Zāwa - zāwa; koča - koča; goča - goča.
Vang, vang(o)vang	وَنِگ وَنِگ(و)وَنِگ	"cony; grizzle or cry"	Ogā - ogā
Veng - veng	وَنِگ وَنِگ	"grizzle"	Wāy - wāy(sawagu)
Vül - vül	وُؤل وُؤل	"tossing"	
Vey وِی vya vāy وای vir vaveila!	وای ویر وای وِیلا	"woe! alas!"	Kā
Voy voy!	وِی وِی	"oh!"	Henā - henā!
Ha '! ها Hín! هین Hó! hān! هان hé! ho!	هو هوی	"oh! behold!"	Hé - - !
Hāj - o - vāj	ها ج و واج	"flabbergasted"	
Hā! هان han! hān - o - hín! hā - vo - hān!	ها هان و هین ها و هان	"beware"	Wā - ! yā!yā!
Hāv ها و hāv - o - hāv	ها و ها و	"war cry"	Wā - - -
Hāy!	های	"oh! ah!"	Mā - - !
Hāy - hā(y) hāyā - hāy	های ها (ی) های یا های	"cry of weeping"	Poro - poro; ōy - ōy
		"to be choked with tears"	Šiku - šiku(nako)
Hāy های Huy	هوی	"tumult; uproar"	Zāwa - zāwa gāya - gāya wāy - wāy
hāy - ha(y) hāy(o)hū(y)	های ها (ی) های (و)هوی (ی)		
Hāh!hāh!hāh!	ها ه ، ها ه ، ها ه	"hey!"	oy!
Hāy! های hoy! hāy - hay!	هوی های های	"hey!hurry up!"	Sā - sā -
Herā	هرا	"noise of falling debris"	Gāšan

Horā	هَرَا	“alarm;fear”	Wa! ka – !
Horrā	هَرَّا	“dreadful noise”	Ban;don
Horrā! هَرَا Hūrrā	هَوْرَا	“hurrah;cheer”	Banzai!
Hort(hort)	هَرْت + هَرْت	“sip”	Suru – suru
Horry	هَرِّي	“(to have a rasping sensation)”	Doki – doki; botari
His! هِيس hiš!	هِيَش	“hiss”	ši – – –
Heq – heq هَقْهَق hak – hak héqq – o – heq هَقْ هَقْ	هَكْمَك هَقْ هَقْ	“cry of weeping”	Méso – méso;
Hén – hen هِن هِن	هِن هِن	“to gasp for breath”	Hā – hā – hā
Ho(y) هُو(ي)	هَو(ي)	“false rumor”	
Havār(kašidan) هَوَا ر(كشیدن)	هَوَا ر(كشیدن)	“cry for help, shout”	Waa – ;ka –

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- 11) Miller, id. p. 294.
- 12) cf. id.
- 13) Keene, Donald; Anthology of Japanese Literature; Tuttle, Tokyo, 1956, p. 194.
- 14) Kindaichi Haruhiko; The Japanese Language, Tuttle, Tokyo, 1978, p. 264.
- 15) Suzuki Takao; Words in Context, Miura, A. (tr.), Kodansh, Tokyo, 1978.
- 16) cf. Martin, id. pp. 755 – 758.
- 17) cf. id. pp. 786 – 7
- 18) cf. id. p. 282.
- 19&20) id. pp. 1023 – 24.
- 21) cf. Miller, id. p. 297.
- 22) For the phoneme “q” see: Windfuhr, L. Cernot; Persian Grammar, History. . . i n “Trends of Linguistic” Series, Mouton, The Hague, 1979, pp. 138 – 9.
- 23&24) Martin, id. p. 1024.
- 25) hagh – shenās, A.M.; Avā – shenāsi (Phonetics), Agāh, Tehrān, 1977, pp. 141 – 2.
- 26) (quoted from) Miller, id. p. 304.
- 27) Keene, id. p. 189.
- 28) cf. Miller, id., p. 305
- 29) Translation from: Nicholson, A.; Introduction to Rumi with Commentary and Annotations to the Mathnavi – e Manavi, (O. Ovānesian's edition), Tehran Univ., Tehran, 1977, p. 187.
- 30) Gozide – ie Tārikh – e Beihaghi; Dabirsiāghi, m. (ed.), Ketabhā – iē Jibi, Tehran, 1977, p. 148.
- 31) (quoted from) Ayandeh, Vol. II, No. 11 – 12 (1986), p. 777.
- 32) Asiré Khāk (A Collection of Short Stories), Tehrān, 1978 (3rd. ed.), p. 87.